

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request entry of the herein-contained amendment under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.312.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1 and 15 will have been amended. In particular, by the present amendment Applicant will have inserted "direction" into claim 1 to ensure self-consistency in the terminology utilized in the claim. Additionally, Applicant will have changed the dependency of claim 15 (from claim 1) to now depend from claim 14. This change is made to ensure that there is adequate and sufficient antecedent basis for the terminology of claim 15.

Applicant respectfully submits that entry of the present amendments is appropriate and proper under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.1312. In particular, while Applicants acknowledge that once a Notice of Allowance has been issued, Applicants may not amend an application, the present amendments are appropriate for entry under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.1312.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to exercise his discretion and approve the present amendment for entry under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.312. In particular, Applicants are not continuing the prosecution of the present application by these changes. Moreover, these changes do not involve a significant amount of work on the part of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office since a copy of the claims is attached herewith.

These changes merely eliminate minor typographical and clerical errors. These changes do not raise new issues requiring further consideration of search and no new matter is introduced by these changes. Moreover, these changes do not change the

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scope of the claims and thus do not continue prosecution of the application in any fashion. Rather, these changes are necessary to ensure clarity of the claim language and thus to enhance and reinforce the validity of the patent issued from the present application.

Applicant additionally notes that the present application was allowed on the first action and thus Applicants have not had a chance to further improve the form of the claims after filing. For this additional reason, it is respectfully submitted that entry of the present Amendment is appropriate and is thus respectfully requested.

Accordingly, in view of the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to exercise his discretion and approve the present amendment for entry under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.312.

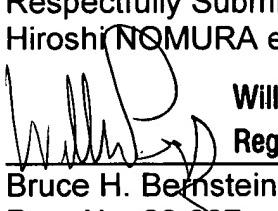
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

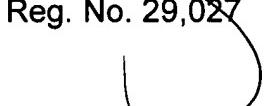
Applicants have submitted an Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.312 and have provided a basis for entry thereof under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.312. Accordingly, Applicants submit, for the reasons set forth above that entry of the present Amendment is appropriate and proper.

The amendments to the claims made in this Response, have not been made to overcome the prior art and should thus be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability. Accordingly, no estoppel should be deemed to attach to these changes or to these claims.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding the present application or this Response, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
Hiroshi NQMURA et al.


William Pieprz
Reg. No. 33,630


Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191